



**NOTES OF THE SECOND MEETING OF
THE EUROPEAN HIGH DEFINITION FORUM (EHDF)
Paris, 23 January 2006**

FEBRUARY 2006

EHDF 004

- 1.0 The European High Definition Forum (EHDF) was established, with the support of the European Commission's services, to bring together European, national and international stakeholders who are actively involved in developing and deploying HDTV in Europe. The EHDF is administered jointly by the Digital Interoperability Forum (DIF) and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).
- 1.1 The 2nd meeting of the EHDF was hosted by Eutelsat in Paris on 23 January 2006.
- 1.2 The agenda of the meeting is at Appendix 1. Due to time constraints, Item 4 (HD Content) was held over until the next meeting. The list of participants is at Appendix 2. The meeting was chaired by David Wood of the EBU.

2. Opening Remarks

- 2.0 Olivier Milliés-Lacroix of Eutelsat welcomed participants. He observed that the HD Ready Label, the result of early collaboration between industry, had been a success. 2006 would be the year in which HD became a reality, with both the Winter Olympics and World Cup being broadcast in HD. However, more HD content was required. (The availability of HD content was a recurring theme of the meeting.)
- 2.1 The Chair reminded participants that the EHDF was a forum for exchanging knowledge and experience. It was important that the EHDF should add value to the activities of the participants.

3. Update on Progress on HD

- 3.0 Presentations will be made available later. The key points are summarised below.

a) National Platforms

3.1 *Belgium*

- A website explaining HD (in both French and Dutch) to the general public had been launched; and
- Tentative plans for roadshows, training, etc, had been developed.

3.2 *France*

- The Forum now has 56 members, including some 'guests' from the academic sector;
- HD on satellite would be launched in Q1/2006, using MPEG4-AVC;
- No announcements about HD on DTT or ADSL had been made (although on the latter there would be tests during the French Tennis Open); and
- A recommendation on master tape formats had been agreed for use by the post-production sector (available at www.hd_forum.fr).

3.3 *Germany*

- Both ProSieben/Sat 1 and Premiere had HD content on air. ProSieben/Sat 1's content was mainly up - converted from SD. STBs for the Premiere service were in short supply: the situation is expected to improve before the World Cup;
- Kabel Baden Wurtemberg would feed Premiere's signals of the World Cup to its network;
- Plugfests at IRT (covering 3 STB and 8 display manufacturers) tested interfaces, formats, content protection, etc with quite satisfactory results. (NB. The results are not available publicly.) In summary, the tests revealed that standards were interpreted differently in different chipsets, and switching between 720P/180i and MPEG2/4 was not a problem.

3.4 *Italy*

- There would be an experimental roll-out, connected with the Winter Olympics, in February 2006 and then a launch to commercial premises in July;
- Availability of frequencies would constrain HD on DTT. However, there would be experiments in areas where analogue was switched off from July;
- Key issues include:
 - Persuading citizens and policy makers that HD is a key innovation, not a luxury, and not another platform (deployed platforms are compatible with it); and
 - Current STBs could be used for 2nd and 3rd sets; and
- Increase in resolution would enable interactive services to be closer to the internet. Full internet access options of major APIs would be implementable.

3.5 *Spain*

- The Ministry of Industry had provided some funding (c.€530k) to examine interactive HD (using MHP);
- Various technical options are being considered and tested; and

- Hispasat is testing DVB-S2, MPEG2, MPEG4/VC1.

3.6 *Sweden*

- The Forum now has 30 members, covering all aspects of the delivery chain. Each member contributes €900, mainly to support the website (Norway, Finland and Denmark have been offered access to the website for a small fee.);
- Key challenges are:
 - Shortage of STBs and content; and
 - Overcoming the perception that HDTV will be a reality in a reasonable timescale; and
- The launch of HD on satellite has been announced. No clear plans for DTT or cable had yet emerged.

3.7 *United Kingdom*

- Shopping channels had joined the Forum;
- Growth in HD programme production was observed;
- Ofcom had allocated 2 DTT frequencies for a HD trial in June (for which there would be 400 HD STBs);
- HD Ready displays were registered on the DTG website. Some issues with HDMI were being examined; and
- Flatscreen sales were very high.

b) Operators

3.8 *upc*

- HD is integral to upc's 'go digital' strategy; the elements of which include the EPG, VOD, PVR and HDTV;
- First targeted countries are the Netherlands, France and Ireland. HD would be available on cable in the Netherlands (except KDN's network) before the World Cup;
- Shortage of content is a 'big problem'; and
- upc has developed a strategic partnership with Phillips.

3.9 *BSkyB*

- No dates for launch had been announced; and
- The channel line-up included Sky Sports, Sky Movies, Artsworld, some Sky One shows, National Geographic and Discovery.

3.10 *Mediaset*

- Evaluating using of analogue frequencies after switch off; and
- Preparing production centres.

3.11 *Sky Italia*

- The challenges are the availability of STBs and content;
- The HD service would launch with digiboxes, not PVRs; and
- The launch would be to commercial premises first.

3.12 *SES Astra*

- Continuing to support customers;
- 6/7 transponders or 11 channels being used for HD; and
- With MPEG4, a conservative compression (c.15 Mbits/sec) rate is necessary at present. The aim is to bring this below 10Mbits before the end of the year.

3.13 *Eutelsat*

- Sponsoring Winter Olympics, in collaboration with RAI; and
- Launched demo channel in France.

3.14 *Euro 1080*

- Launched HD1 and 2
- Investigating providing coverage for SE Russia/Ukraine;
- Signals on 4 satellites and distributed on cable (using MPEG2).
- Content *is* available: the problem lies with access to rights and signals; and
- HD2 would carry the World Cup to large screens/theatres in the EU (except France and Germany).

4. EICTA Update on HD Ready Labelling Scheme

- 4.0 77 companies have signed the licence to use the HD Ready label. EICTA is taking action where the label is being used on displays which do not comply with the licence criteria. *EICTA wishes to be informed of such cases.*
- 4.1 Some issues had arisen regarding the software compatibility of HDCP, which, unlike HDMI, is not subject to independent testing. The feasibility of establishing an HDCP test centre could be considered.
- 4.2 In relation to the proposed HD Ready receiver logo, it was noted that numerous requests for criteria to be included in the licence specification had been received, and not all could be accommodated. It should be borne in mind that the aim was to determine the *minimum* specification of a receiver to which an HD Ready label could be applied.
- 4.3 Notably, broadcasters had taken different positions on whether HDCP should be on or off as the default for free-to-air services. EICTA considered that there is no clear regulatory framework in the EU to guarantee sufficient receiver behaviour and protect consumers' and rightsholders' interests (contrasting this with the use of the broadcast flag in the US). Hence, a regulatory solution did not exist.
- 4.4 Thomas Curran (thomas.curran@t-online.de) agreed to lead an e-mail discussion group on the subject of HDCP on/off, and certain related issues.

5. Training for HD

- 5.0 The requirement for extensive and continuous training, together with an overview of the HD training programme developed by BSkyB, was presented. It was noted that it was more difficult for national fora to develop training

programmes due to their limited resources. One possibility which was proposed was to bundle training into the equipment, etc procurement process.

- 5.1 Dieter Platel (dieter.platel@agoria.be) agreed to lead an e-mail discussion group and develop a questionnaire which would facilitate an audit of training programmes and materials.

6. Closing Remarks

- 6.0 The European Commission's services noted that it was the anniversary of the Commission's workshop where a roadmap for HDTV was agreed amongst industry players. The Commission was pleased with the HD Ready labelling scheme and the creation of the EHDF. It considered that the EHDF represented a new paradigm for solving technical interoperability issues.
- 6.1 The Commission's first priority was to help Member States achieve digital switchover. HDTV could act as an accelerator of DTV.

7. Date and Place of Next Meeting

- 7.0 The 3rd meeting of the EHDF will be on 2 June 2006 at BSKyB in West London.



**AGENDA OF THE SECOND MEETING
OF THE EUROPEAN HIGH DEFINITION
FORUM (EHDF)**

Paris, 23 January 2006 from 12.30 to 16.00

EHDF 003

Venue: Eutelsat

70 rue Balard
Paris Cédex 15
Tel. +33 1 53 98 48 57

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| 1. | Opening remarks | 12.30 |
| 2. | Update on Progress on HD: National Platforms and Operators | 12.40 |
| 3. | EICTA – Update of HD – Ready licensing, display uptake, minimum receiver requirements | 13.40 |
| 4. | HD Content <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Games including Online Content• Content Interchange• HD Coverage of the World Cup• Stimulating Content | 14.10 |
| 5. | Training for HD (BSkyB) | 15.00 |
| 6. | Open Session | 15.15 |
| 7. | Any other business | |
| 8. | Date and place of next meeting | |

2nd Meeting of EHDF, Paris, 23 January 2006***Participants***

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